The following document was discovered recently. All annotations and endnotes are the discoverer's own. Forgive her informality, we never had the time to discuss professionalism.

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STATEMENT OF CONSENT: PHASE I

The word "you" used in this document refers to the main reader, and excludes observers.

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Introduction To The Task At Hand

The task is a form of research study, and may safely be called a "clinical trial." Though friends and family may no longer be considered reliable advisors, it is recommended that you take your time before making any decision to participate.

As one of those who never chased the alluring or even accomplished the tedious, your health was not affected greatly when both categories lost their meaning. You are well adapted to current affairs, and to the task of moving past them.

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Purpose

Health and wellness are, as always, more than just a private matter. This is one of the few things to have remained unchanged since the arrival of the Magnates, whose desires are unrestrained and whose vigilance is boundless. Purporting to be the sons of a great king from a land beyond, the Magnates are reported by eyewitnesses to ride on horseback. Such reports may be justifiably disbelieved, on the basis that horses are, according to the scientific consensus, incapable of traveling from Magadan to Nouadhibou in a mere three hours. The small number of witnesses, and the state of [redacted] in which they are often found (a condition which is described in greater detail in Document Ψ [1]) make it difficult to cross-check claims by conventional means.

Though we of the Wise have seen better days, it must be noted that parts of our old way of life were very well suited for survival. In

past interviews, you have related that you once feared to make small changes in your life because such changes were unseemly, and higher powers would come to know of your actions and misread them. You have related a sense of being bounded by a passive sort of danger and dominance, in which one's path is chosen of one's own volition but will wake a sleeping beast if altered. Such things are true still, and we are better for them. The great truth of modern times is that, through one's links with others, one is bound to the service of others. Those who deny this are unworthy even of suffering.

Suffering, when undertaken willingly, is the greatest sign of commitment. An ancient civilization of ours survived many disasters (droughts, crop failures, and famines) in its own time. The kings and elites did what they could to ameliorate such events, but did not truly gain the trust of their population until they offered sacrifices of their own blood, slicing and piercing their cheeks, lips, and tongues. This religious ritual, though painful and highly stressful, was a form of trial. To undergo it was a proof of commitment to the welfare and beliefs of one's brethren. It made social bonds into the sinews and tendons of a group, empowering it to act as one. Such techniques were used to unprecedented effect by General Hayashi, who led us of the Wise in a victory against [redacted], Magnate of Sector Sixteen.

The Florists, whose hands cull lives to uplift Life, have long sought truth from facts. The notion that bloodletting alone could grant great power is not a fact. It is a supposition, and the Florists' unification of the Wise has enabled this harmful superstition's permanent discardment. The Florists know that something other than blood and pain signals dedication to a cause, and that the strength which is invoked by the suffering of the Wise does not belong to the Wise. The Florists have recently devised a more effective and direct method of calling upon the Guides, whose mercy is all-encompassing and whose vigilance is boundless.

Before moving on, we ask you to certify the following statement(s):

☐ I have discarded my suppositions. My quest for knowledge begins anew.

☐ I am aware that the Florists have commissioned the task at hand in the name of all of the Wise. I resolve to work diligently in their employ.

Signature: _____

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Your Role

The arrival of the Magnates, and the threat they posed to all, began a re-evaluation of the self among us of the Wise. In this time of unmitigated disaster, what value did one's own self hold and how much of it could be demanded in the service of others? The Florists have known and taught that the self is a single piece of something greater. All selves are, ultimately, pieces of this greater mass. This is why we of the Wise find others among ourselves to be familiar in appearance, customs, ethics, and beliefs. We share similar problems and face them in similar ways. From this, the Florists derived the Lesser Saying: "one is the other." The Greater Saying ("The Wise are rightly guided") comes from the knowledge that the greater mass from which we have been spit out also constitutes the Guides. All the old strategies of the Wise—praying, beckoning, appeasing, ignoring—in dealing with these beings of divine stature were ineffectual. However, the Guides are very responsive to changes in the abstract mass of which they are constituted. Such changes could momentarily alert the Guides to the Wise and their dire condition. The great elephants could be woken, and as they rose up the earth shook and horses lost their footing. While bloodletting could serve as a partial sacrifice of the self, offered humbly to the Guides, many false leaders among the Wise made sacrifices to increase their own glory, and cut corners to avoid pain. Bloodletting was an inconsistent and unreliable practice. Its own contradictions ate it alive.

The Florists first gathered subjects among the Wise shortly after news of General Hayashi's victory became public. The first experimental attempts at complete abnegation of self, though intended as a gradual and efficient process, did not proceed smoothly. The first set of subjects, seeking to sabotage the experiment, tirelessly and mechanically repeated behaviors that they had named as "integral to their identity" in past interviews. If requisite materials for these activities could not be found, the subjects devised substitutes (Subject ◕ attempted cooking, using shards of his residential facility's toilet as utensils). Cessation of these behaviors only occurred in the event of successful abnegation or when the subject became unfit to proceed any further with the process. The second and

third sets of subjects exhibited symptoms of [redacted] and [redacted], which are elucidated further in Monograph ☲ [2].

The Florists now understand the Guides better. Their movements, while not on a scale beyond comprehension, are beyond restraint. They are a blunt tool. But what value does precision hold? Precision simply means that repeated attempts at a task all achieve similar results. What if such results are unhelpful? Better to seek accuracy by making it impossible to miss the target. The Magnates are a plague upon the world, but they depend on the world for survival. The movements of the Guides accelerate the cycles of history, and bring closer the moment when world is made anew. The Magnates will not survive the transformation. One way or another, we of the Wise will finally be free of this long and terrible winter.

Before moving on, we ask you to certify the following statement(s):

☐ Those who do not love the Florists no longer deserve to be called or treated as Wise.

Signature: _____

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Your Responsibilities / Daily Proceedings

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted].[redacted].[redacted]?[redacted]?[redacted].[redacted].

[redacted]
Pictured: A diagram of the aforementioned 14-day program.

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Concluding Statements / Certificate of Consent

☐ I pledge myself to the pursuit of joyous parlance with the Guides, from whose magnanimity the world will emerge replaced and thus cured of the Magnates. I humbly and truly dedicate all within my possession to this end.

☐ I testify that I am the sole owner of my body, and agree, if there arises sufficient cause to doubt this claim, to permit testing to prove that this is the case.

Signature: _____

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[1] To date, no copy of Form Ψ has been found. Though references to it abound in similar documents to this one, it is presumed to have never existed.

[2] [redacted]...
[redacted]?!